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The Way of Eternal Life

Doctrines and Ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

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Written Especially for Young People

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PREFACE

Under the title, "The Way of Eternal Life," some of the leading doctrines and ordinances of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints are discussed in this little book. It is written especially for the young people of Zion. Its purpose is to explain to them, in a manner easily to be understood, the faith of their fathers; in other words, to point out to them, and to encourage them to pursue, the course of conduct which will bring the greatest happiness and satisfaction in this life, and which will lead them to eternal salvation in the life hereafter.

Young people are not satisfied with a bare explanation of the gospel precepts: they wonder why certain prin-

ciples and ordinances are accepted and practiced in the Church, and they want to know the purpose of them—why they should be obeyed in order to gain salvation. The writer has sought, in the following pages, not only to describe the gospel principles and practices, but also to show why they are needful, and to offer some helpful suggestions as to how people may learn to practice them and thereby receive the blessings of so doing.

Several requests from parents, and from boys and girls also, have induced the writer to publish what is here presented; and it is hoped that the modest volume will be of service to the children of the Latter-day Saints, to whom it is respectfully dedicated.

THE AUTHOR

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The Way of Eternal Life

I. TRUE RELIGION

When you read some of the statements made in this chapter and in following divisions of this book you may question their accuracy. They are propositions presented without accompanying proof. The reader is asked to be not hasty in rejecting them before giving them fair consideration.

Many generally accepted proverbs appear to be incorrect philosophy at first sight. When, as a boy, the writer first heard the old maxim which runs something like this: "If you want something done, get a busy man to do it," he did not see the wisdom of the expression. He thought a person of

leisure would be the most prompt in performing any work given him, but later experience and observation convinced him of the truth of the adage.

In studying religion or any other branch of knowledge the student will often find it necessary to accept statements of facts as they are set forth and be content to wait until he is further advanced before the full force of the truth dawns upon his mind.

The study and practice of religion ought to appeal to everyone. To neglect it is folly. Disregard for the laws of physical well-being brings suffering and regret. It is far more serious to disregard the laws of spiritual well-being, because the consequence is more lasting. The one ends with death, while the other reaches into eternity.

A knowledge of the principles of

correct living, or in other words, true religion, is the highest of all human acquirements, and the practice of them the greatest of all accomplishments. Religion stands for purity, culture and all that is good, it is the foundation of every worthy pursuit. It serves as a gauge by which to determine the value of knowledge; and anything that conflicts with it may be regarded as unworthy of acceptance.

The test of true religion is the power it has to bring out the best that is in man, and to give him the greatest joy and freedom that can be had in life; for the purpose of religion is to afford mankind a guide to conduct which will develop all his higher powers and bring him lasting happiness. True religion broadens the mind, makes one tolerant, and fills his heart with love

for his fellow-beings. It brings to him the greatest happiness—that which arises from seeking the happiness of others.

It is an error to think that religion is only to prepare one for the life to come. It is for this life also. Its rewards are enjoyed in mortality as well as in the hereafter. True religion teaches the art of right living, whether in the present or in the future. It forms the source of real happiness here and in eternity. The highest state of earthly happiness can never be enjoyed except by complying with the laws of life; and to do this one must be directed by religious principles. Immoderate indulgence in sensual pleasures is not sanctioned by true religion. It demands moderation in

these pleasures that one's happiness may be more lasting—that he may have greater joy.

Religion in its broadest sense embraces everything that is praiseworthy, and all good deeds are prompted by religious impulses, whether or not the one who performs the good acts is conscious of it.

Some people think religion is burdensome, and they feel that they are free because they take no part in church affairs; and yet if they are not worshipers of God they are worshipers of mammon, or the things of the world; and such worship is more exacting and burdensome than the true worship of that Being who alone is worthy of all reverence.

There are those who scoff at the sacraments or sacred ordinances of the

Church, while they themselves are subject to all kinds of superstitious beliefs and practices. Some there are who ridicule the efficacy of prayer, notwithstanding the fact that nothing of worth can be accomplished without it.

Such people, perhaps, have never thought deeply enough to learn that all mankind are instinctively religious, and that they, either consciously or unconsciously, worship some being or object. They do not realize the great truth that if their worship is not of that character which tends to exalt, it must be such as tends to degrade. They may not know that the way of eternal life is the only consistent path of life that one can follow.

II. MAN'S CONDUCT GOVERNED BY LAW

All things are governed by law. To make progress and to gain happiness, man must be obedient to law—not to one law or set of laws only, but all laws that affect his welfare. To enjoy health, he must conform to the laws of his physical being; if he would live unmolested, he must observe the laws of his country; and to possess a peace of conscience he should live in harmony with the laws of spiritual life.

It does not give lasting pleasure to break any of these laws; and it is a mistake to believe that obedience to spiritual law interferes with one's liberty or pleasure, any more than does compliance with any other law curtail

freedom. Obedience to law makes one free and independent. "The end of the law," it is said respecting the law of the land, "is not to abolish or restrain but to preserve and enlarge freedom." So it is with the law of eternal life. Its purpose is to enlarge or extend man's freedom by restraining him from going to excesses that make him incapable of enjoying the pleasures of life. At the same time it enjoins upon him such service as will enlarge his capacity for true enjoyment.

One who obeys spiritual laws most faithfully receives the greatest amount of real joy and satisfaction in this life and has the best prospects of eternal happiness in the future. True worship consists of nothing more nor less than obeying the laws of correct living. The Lord does not require any observances

on the part of his children except such as are beneficial to them, and by obeying the laws of spiritual growth they lay the only suitable foundation for moral, mental, and even physical attainments.

The saying of Alexander Pope, that "Order is heaven's first law," has been questioned, and it has been asserted by some of our own writers that "Obedience is heaven's first law," and that order is the result of obedience. It is certainly true that one must learn the necessity of yielding obedience to law —either physical or spiritual—to enjoy its benefits. Refusal or neglect to comply with law is the cause of most of the troubles mankind experience; and the lesson of obedience is one of the first and most important in life.

Salvation is education. "A man can-

not be saved in ignorance." To get a knowledge of the true plan of salvation requires study and work as well as faith. To obey spiritual law it is first needful that one shall become acquainted with it; and to give willing and intelligent obedience he should be convinced that it is good. He should love to abide by it, because he feels that it is wholesome, and will make him better for having lived in harmony with its teachings.

Religious principles upon which salvation depends are simple and easy to understand. The way of eternal life may be pointed out in plain language. There are no "deep subjects" nor mysteries connected with the essential doctrines of salvation.

III. NATURAL FOR MAN TO WORSHIP

It is natural for man to admire that which is beautiful and grand; whether it be an object of nature or a creation of his own hand, it gives him joy to behold it. When he contemplates the wonders of the universe, this admiration is increased, and he regards these things with reverence. This latter term is used to express heightened admiration. To reverence an object means to hold it as sacred.

The rude savage observes objects and forces in nature which call forth his wonder and awe. Instinctively he reveres them because of their superiority or mystery. He recognizes that they are beyond his power to cre-

ate or control, and he fears them. In his fear he seeks to avoid doing anything that he thinks might cause their disfavor, and he tries to do those things which he believes will please them. Such acts are what constitute the savage's system of worship—his religion.

Beings with higher intelligence, in searching more deeply into the forces and phenomena of nature, discover that these forces are controlled by laws. They learn that there are intricacies in the operation of these laws such as could not exist without the direction of some intelligent Being. The more they study and investigate, the more are they convinced that there must be a Designer and Creator who directs all things in the universe to accomplish his own purposes. Then, instead of fearing and worshiping the

inanimate objects and forces of nature, the intelligent man, while admiring the creations about him, seeks to worship the Creator of them.

Most all human beings worship some object or person. That which man esteems the highest or greatest of all things or beings—that which he loves with all his might, mind and strength —is the object of his veneration or reverence.

If a man loves wealth above all other things, he may be regarded as a worshiper of wealth.

A child reverences its parents, if it has not been taught that there is a greater Being to worship. It beholds with wonderment the superior power and intelligence of its parent. It loves that parent and respects his wishes. It gives obedience to the parent's teach-

ings. It appeals to its parent for those things which it desires and cannot obtain through its own efforts alone. It is pleased with and grateful for favors shown, and seeks to express gratitude in words as well as by conduct. In other words, it regards its parents with reverence and prays or appeals to them for what it needs. These acts on the part of the child constitute a system of worship, and are a part of child nature, showing that worship is an inherent trait of man.

The disposition of men to admire or reverence some being greater than themselves is a good trait. It is a God-given attribute that is of the highest value to the human family. It is one that should not be suppressed, but should be cultivated. When one admires the good qualities of another, it

follows that he will have a desire to possess those qualities himself; and this will give him an incentive to rise and become like the one he admires. A child looks with wonder at the superior power of its parent, and tries to become like that parent. In like manner the man who is taught concerning the greatness and goodness of God has the desire awakened within him to become like the Creator—his Father.

As may be learned from the foregoing, the outward form of worship adopted by a person or a community is called religion. Among the unenlightened peoples of the earth the forms of worship are varied according to the intelligence of the people and the teachings they have received. But there can be only one true form

of worshiping the Creator, and that is the form established and revealed by him—the gospel as taught by Jesus Christ and his authorized and inspired servants.

IV. THE CREATOR

"Three things are necessary in order that any rational and intelligent being may exercise faith in God unto life and salvation. First, the idea that he actually exists. Secondly, a correct idea of his character, perfections and attributes. Thirdly, an actual knowledge that the course of life which he is pursuing is according to his will." (Lectures on Faith, Doctrine and Covenants.)

It was stated in the preceding chapter that the works of nature, when studied intelligently, lead mankind to believe that there is a Creator—a Being of supreme intelligence and power that directs the forces of the universe. This statement does not imply that

man first learned about the existence of a Supreme Being in that way. The knowledge of God first came by the Creator revealing himself personally to Adam, the father of the human race. This knowledge was handed down by tradition from generation to generation. In later times the Lord revealed himself to Enoch, to Noah, to Abraham, to Moses, and to others, thereby confirming the tradition that came from father to son. Afterwards, the Lord Jesus Christ himself came upon earth to dwell among men. He reconfirmed the truth taught for ages concerning the Creator.

In these latter days Joseph Smith came as a witness for the Creator. He testified anew that there is a God in heaven. He declared he knew this for himself, for he beheld both God the

Father and his Son Jesus Christ. His testimony has been accepted by hundreds of thousands of people who have received satisfactory evidence that his words are true.

This great prophet, Joseph Smith, was instrumental in bringing to light the Book of Mormon, an ancient volume of Scripture as sacred and as authentic as the Bible; and the revelations given to him, and contained in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, form a volume of modern Scripture which is also sacred and inspired. These witnesses all testify to the existence and character of the Creator. They are confirmed by the testimony of reason, history and science, and are worthy of the most earnest consideration.

While there is abundant proof in

existence to establish the truth of these several witnesses, it cannot be presented here. Such works as treat upon the divinity of the sacred Scriptures and of Joseph Smith's mission are recommended to the reader for study. Above all, he should read the Scriptures themselves, for by so doing he will find that they contain evidence of their own truth. By considering these proofs of the existence of God, one cannot fail to be impressed with them.

As to the personal and physical character of the Creator, these same witnesses—the Scriptures—bear unmistakable testimony. The Bible, in its very first chapter, tells us that God created man in his own image. The same book says that Adam was the son of God; and it teaches further that we are all the children of God—that he

is our Father: that is, the Father of our spirits.

When we are given to understand that he is our Father, it is easy to believe that we are like him, and that he is a personal Being in form like man. Jesus Christ, when he was upon the earth, appeared like other men, and yet he was the Son of God, and was associated with our Father in heaven in the creation of the earth. He is called in the Scriptures the Creator of heaven and earth; and this is correct, for he was and is united with the Father in all things—not united in body, but in harmony with him in purpose. It is plainly stated in the Scriptures that the Father and the Son Jesus Christ are two distinct Beings. The Father has a body of flesh and bones as well as a spirit; the Son also has a body like

that of the Father; but the Holy Ghost is a personage of spirit. We learn of other characteristics of the Creator from the Scriptures. They assure us that he is all-powerful; that he is full of love for his children; and that his promises never fail. His children can therefore trust in him and rely upon his promises.

It has already been suggested that the Scriptures be studied in order to strengthen one's conviction that God exists, that he is our Father, and that he is mindful of our welfare. Without doubt, the most positive proof one might obtain of the existence of the Creator is through personal experience. Our religion and the Scriptures teach us that we should pray to our Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ. If we do this and our prayers

are answered we have personal knowledge that he lives and that he answers prayers.

In addition to praying for this knowledge, we should work for it. That is, we should seek to keep the commandments of God as fast as we learn what they are. The surest way to know the truth of a principle is to practice it, and thereby prove it for ourselves. This is the way a child gains knowledge in school. When the teacher explains the principles of reading, for example, the child learns and practices the instructions and finds for himself that the principles are correct, and thereby gets a knowledge of the art of reading; and thus he progresses on the highway of education.

The great Teacher, through his inspired prophets, has marked out the

way of eternal life and invites his children to walk therein; and by doing so they are assured as they advance day by day, that they are on the right path, for the landmarks they behold indicate to them that they are pursuing the proper course.

V. OUR PAST LIFE

Our life here on earth is not the beginning of our existence. The revelations given through the Prophet Joseph Smith make the truth known that all mankind had an existence before they were born here upon the earth. That is, their spirits existed without bodies of flesh and bone. That spiritual existence was a real, individual life, and each person was possessed of intelligence and will-power.

The Bible contains passages that lead its readers to believe that the ancient people of God understood that there was a spirit life before this mortal existence; but the doctrine is not so clearly stated in that book as it is by Joseph Smith, the modern prophet.

Not much is known about that spiritual life. We have no recollection of it, and what is said about it in the books of sacred Scripture, both modern and ancient, is very meager.

It may be fortunate that but little is revealed of the past existence or of the future state of man. There is so much to be learned concerning the present life and its duties that one must apply himself diligently to gain the knowledge needed here. Were it possible to explore the past and the future, the present, no doubt, would be neglected.

The "Pearl of Great Price," a work accepted by the Latter-day Saints as one of the standard religious books of our Church, tells us that the great patriarch, Abraham, was shown in vision the spirits of men in the spirit world, as they existed before their

birth upon the earth. He was given to understand that spirits "have no beginning; they existed before," and that they shall have no end, for they are eternal. Among this great host of spirits, Abraham says he saw many noble and great ones, and the Lord told him that of these noble ones he would make his rulers. Abraham was also informed that he himself was one of the great ones in the spirit world, and that he was chosen of the Lord before he was born.

As to what was done by or among the spirits of mankind in their pre-natal state we are not told in detail; but one or two great events that took place before this world was organized and prepared for the abode of man are revealed through the writings of Abraham. Here is what he says:

"And there stood one among them that was like unto God, and he said unto those who were with him, We will go down, for there is space there, and we will take these materials, and we will make an earth whereon these may dwell; and we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; and they who keep their first estate shall be added upon; and they who keep not their first estate shall not have glory in the same kingdom with those who keep their first estate; and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads for ever and ever."

The earth above referred to means our earth, and those whom the Lord intended to prove were the untried spirits who were to come and people this

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globe. The "first estate" mentioned means the spirit life before the earthly existence or mortal life; the "second estate" refers to this present existence here on earth.

Another occurrence which took place in the eternal world before this earth was inhabited is described in the "Writings of Moses," found in the "Pearl of Great Price:"

"And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me saying—Behold, here am I, send me, I will be thy son, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost, and surely I will do it; wherefore give me thine honor. But, behold, my beloved Son, which was my

Beloved and Chosen from the beginning, said unto me—Father, thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, and sought to destroy the agency of man, which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also that I should give him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down."

The position Satan sought when he asked the Lord God to send him, was that of redeemer or savior of mankind. His purpose was to save all mankind by force, taking from them their agency or freedom to choose for themselves. Then he demanded God's honor as reward for what he proposed to do. He was selfish and rebellious and sought to exalt himself. Jesus, in meekness and humility said to the

Father, "Thy will be done, and the glory be thine forever."

The benefit of understanding these truths concerning man's origin and past existence is this: The knowledge that we are the children of God, sent to earth to be tried and proven, and that it is our destiny to become like our Father, will inspire us to strive for the exalted position in store for all who will keep their "second estate." This knowledge of our possibilities will give us higher aims in life, and will help us to overcome weaknesses and surmount all obstacles.

VI. THE FALL AND REDEMPTION OF MAN

It might help one to understand the nature of the fall of our first parents by presenting a comparison: The children of mortal parents dwell in a kind of Paradise or Eden in the home of their father and mother. Here they are surrounded with all that is needful for their comfort. Their parents provide for their every want. But there comes a time, after they have grown to manhood, when they are expected to leave their happy abodes and battle with the adversities of life in an unsympathetic world, when they have to earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. Thy may not be turned out, but their parents, while they love them, are

pleased to have their children go, knowing that the experience they will get by so doing will be for their lasting good, as it is the only way whereby they can develop the powers of self-reliance and independent action.

Do not get the idea that the fall of Adam and the atonement of Christ are some deep mysteries that cannot be understood. The Prophet Nephi makes the meaning clear in a few words. He says: "Adam fell that men migth be; and men are, that they might have joy. And the Messiah cometh in the fulness of time, that he may redeem the children of men from the fall. And because that they are redeemed from the fall, they have become free for ever." (II Nephi 2:25, 26.)

The great plan of the Eternal Father provided that when the spirits from

the spirit world came to live upon this earth they should be clothed with mortal tabernacles—bodies that would die and go to decay. As has been stated in the previous chapter, the spirits are immortal, but their second estate means an existence in a mortal tabernacle, that is a life subject to death or separation of spirit and body.

The account given of Adam, the father of the human race, states that he was placed in the Garden of Eden and forbidden to partake of the fruit of a certain tree in that garden, and that if he did partake of it he should die as a result of this disobedient act. The language of the Scriptures in reference to the partaking of the forbidden fruit may be figurative. Its meaning is that Adam was warned as to the consequence of breaking a certain

law that he might exercise his free agency intelligently. Whatever that law was, Adam did break it—not in a spirit of rebelliousness, but understandingly for a purpose, and to fulfill God's design. Having violated a law of immortality he fell or became mortal, that is, subject to death, and was separated from the presence of God. By what is called the fall of Adam, mortality was brought upon all his posterity. They inherit this condition through being descended from mortal ancestors.

This condition of existence was designed by the Lord for an important purpose—that mankind might gain an experience that would develop their faculties and attributes and thereby fit them for a more glorious estate. So the fall of our first parents was not a

misfortune or calamity, as some believe.

It was not intended that when men should die that would be the end of their existence. What is called death is a separation of the spirit and body. The spirit still lives, while the body decays and returns to the earth from which it was formed. But the Lord designed that man shall live again, eventually, possessing both body and spirit. This reuniting of the body and spirit is called the resurrection. When it takes place there will be no other separation of them. Together they will remain for all eternity, constituting the soul of man in his immortal and glorified condition.

To bring about the mortality of man some law of eternal existence was broken by Adam, and the result of that

act affected all of his race. Through the fall of our first parents their posterity were brought into a condition where they might gain broader experience than they could in their spirit existence, and where they would be subject to sin and its penalty, which is death. In order to make amends for that broken law, and thereby redeem mankind from the effects of sin, it appears that something had to be done which sinful man could not do for himself. The great work that was so essential was that performed by Jesus Christ. He came upon the earth, lived without committing sin, and voluntarily died to redeem all mankind from the effects of Adam's transgression, and also from the effects of their own sins.

This work accomplished by our Savior, the grandeur of which we may

but partially comprehend now, is what is called the atonement; and because Jesus made this atonement he is called the Savior and Redeemer of the world.

We may not be able to fully understand why an atonement was necessary, nor why it should be brought about by the suffering and death of the Son of God. One might ask why it could not be effected in some other way—some way that would involve less suffering. In answer to such a question it may be said that all benefits or blessings come through sacrifice or suffering.

The words of the Savior himself will help us to understand the purpose and the philosophy of the atonement. He said to Nicodemus, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him

should not perish, but have everlasting life." On another occasion he remarked, "Greater love hath no man than this, that he lay down his life for his friends;" and again, "the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep."

But the question, How is man benefited by this manifestation of love on the part of Jesus? is still unanswered. Another saying of the Savior will aid in finding an answer. "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me," he said; meaning, without a doubt, that his being lifted upon the cross and by dying voluntarily because of the great love he had for mankind, would draw all men unto him in love: for love begets love. To be loved one must show love, and through love is the only way by which God intends to save his offspring.

It is clear, then, that the Savior's death for mankind was the most effective method of atonement that can be conceived of. Anything less than his suffering death for them would not appeal so strongly to the minds and hearts of mankind; and when they fully comprehend the intensity of Christ's love for them they will in turn be impelled to love him; and when they love him they will keep his commandments; and by keeping his commandments they will gain salvation. So the greatest factor in God's plan for saving his children is the atonement made by Jesus Christ. Through this act, all mankind, without compulsion, but by their own free agency or desire, may be saved and brought back into his presence, from which by sin they were separated.

That Jesus was himself sinless and had no need of suffering for his own sins, makes it all the more plain that his atonement was entirely unselfish—an act of pure love. This fact may help to make it clear to one's mind why the atonement was made by one who was without sin. A person guilty of sins would evidently have need to atone for his own transgressions, and could not redeem others any more than they could redeem themselves. A man overwhelmed with debt is no more able to pay the debts of others than are those debtors themselves.

There is no need of perplexity about the nature of the atonement. Our duty is to accept it with the deepest gratitude as an assurance of God's unfailing love for his children.

VII. THE PURPOSE OF MORTAL LIFE

In the foregoing chapter it was stated that through the fall of Adam mankind became mortal and subject to death, and that by the atonement of Christ they will be redeemed and resurrected from death to life eternal. The question, "For what purpose is this mortal life?" will naturally present itself to every thinking mind.

The Book of Mormon calls this earthly existence a "probationary state," meaning a life where mankind are proved or tested, and also a "preparatory state" (Alma, chap. 42). This agrees with what the Lord told Abraham when he showed him the "intelligences that were organized before the

world was." The Lord said: "We will make an earth whereon these may dwell; and we will prove them herewith, to see if they will do all things whatsoever the Lord their God shall command them; * * * and they who keep their second estate shall have glory added upon their heads forever and ever" (Pearl of Great Price, Book of Abraham, chap. 3).

It is clearly evident that this life is for mankind to prove themselves. In the spirit life their experiences were limited, as they did not possess physical bodies. Here their powers are enlarged, and they are left much to themselves to do as they may choose, and they are put to the test to determine what they will do. The conditions and surroundings here are well suited for their testing. This life is like a school

well equipped with every facility for giving the training that is offered to those who enter. Here both good and evil are presented before mankind, and they have their agency or freedom to follow their own chosen course of conduct. By choosing to obey the commandments of God they prepare themselves for glory to be "added upon their heads forever." In other words, if they learn the lessons offered in this preparatory school they are fitted for a higher school, where their progression continues towards perfection of life. If they elect to take the wrong course, they suffer the consequences of breaking the laws of their existence. By thus suffering they in time learn the folly of a sinful course, and sooner or later many of them will seek to turn from it and repent of their

sins. In the language of the Scripture, "When they begin to grow up, sin conceiveth in their hearts, and they taste the bitter, that they may know to prize the good" (Pearl of Great Price, Moses, chap. 6).

There is no great virtue in doing right when no other course is open for one to pursue. Hence it is a wise provision that in this world good and evil are placed before mankind that they may exercise their God-given agency and make choice of that which they desire.

But there is so much wickedness and suffering apparent in the world that some people wonder why the Lord permits such things to exist; and some are led to think that if the Lord does permit such sin and cruelty as are known to be in the world he is not the

merciful and loving Being the scriptures declare him to be. Those who think this way do not understand the Lord's plan. They look only to the present and do not consider future results. If mankind were not given the freedom to act as they desire, they would not be responsible beings. Not being able to do anything of their own choice, they could not progress; they could not plan nor create anything. They would be no more than animals, and their intellects would be useless.

Perhaps those who do not see the justice of God in permitting cruelty to exist object only to the great crimes, such as war, massacre and other forms of wholesale destruction. They would limit suffering. But human endurance has a limit, and when that is reached, unconsciousness or death relieves the

sufferer. How suffering could be further limited without interfering with one's agency cannot be conceived. A very simple cause may give great pain, as, for instance, a child may accidentally upset a lamp and cause people to be burned. Because this is possible, should the child be bound hand and foot and not be permitted to develop for fear of causing pain? Again, if mortals were so constituted that they could not feel bodily pain, there would be nothing to prevent them from wantonly injuring or destroying themselves.

If all causes of evil were removed there, of course, would be no suffering; but suffering has its use. It is through suffering that the most valuable lessons are learned. This world is purposely prepared for mankind that they might

endure suffering, anguish and disappointment, else it would not be a place of probation and preparation. Without these agencies human experiences would not be such as tend to develop the virtues inherent in man.

It is good to know the purpose of suffering so that when one is called to endure it he will not complain of Providence, as do those who know not the blessings of adversity, but will be prepared to patiently submit to unavoidable sufferings and receive the benefits to be gained therefrom.

Read the following from a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith:

"If thou art called to pass through tribulation; if thou are in perils among false brethren; if thou art in perils among robbers; if thou art in perils by land or by sea; if thou are accused with

all manner of false accusations; if thine enemies fall upon thee; if they tear thee from the society of thy father and mother and brethren and sisters; and if with a drawn sword thine enemies tear thee from the bosom of thy wife, and of thine offspring, and thine elder son, although but six years of age, shall cling to thy garments, and shall say, My father, my father, why can't you stay with us? O, my father, what are the men going to do with you? and if then he shall be thrust from thee by the sword, and thou be dragged to prison, and thine enemies prowl around thee like wolves for the blood of the lamb; and if thou shouldst be cast into the pit, or into the hands of murderers, and the sentence of death passed upon thee; if thou be cast into the deep; if the billowing surge con-

spire against thee; if fierce winds become thine enemy; if the heavens combine to hedge up the way; and above all, if the very jaws of hell shall gape open the mouth wide after thee, know thou, my son, that all these things shall give thee experience, and shall be for thy good. The Son of Man hath descended below them all; art thou greater than he?" (Doctrine and Covenants 122:5-8.)

VIII. FAITH, THE FIRST STEP ON THE WAY

Did it ever occur to you how much the exercise of faith enters into your every-day life? When you start out in the morning to work, you trust that you will reach your destination—you have faith that you will; when you begin your labor, you assume that you will be able to complete it; and when it is finished, you expect that you will be rewarded for it. And so it is with many other acts of life.

Faith is the first step towards progress in any line. Without it nothing will be attempted with any hope of success. It is so with respect to the plan of life and salvation; and the Scrip-

tures teach that faith is the first step on the way to eternal life.

To worship God, one must believe that he exists, must trust in his almighty power and authority, and must have confidence in his promises: "For he that cometh to God," says the Scripture, "must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him" (Heb. 11:6). He must also have faith in the Lord's authorized servants or representatives—the men who have the right to officiate in his name in performing the ordinances essential to salvation. He should also have faith or confidence in himself, and feel that he is able to win the reward of salvation offered to man.

In connection with the passage of Scripture above quoted it is said that "without faith it is impossible to please

God." The reason it is not possible to please him without faith is because God desires the salvation of his children. Salvation is his greatest gift to man, and to bring this about is his grandest work; as the Scripture says: "Behold this is my work and my glory —to bring to pass the immortality and eternal life of man" (Book of Moses 1:39, Pearl of Great Price).

The Lord desires that all his children should be saved, for he loves every one of them; and as faith is the first step on the road to eternal life, it is pleasing to him to have them enter upon this road, knowing that if they will continue on it will lead them to the blessed goal of salvation, and that until they do possess faith in him they can never make any progress towards eternal happiness.

It may not be necessary to define the meaning of faith, for that is so generally understood. The Apostle Paul says, "Faith is the substance [assurance] of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." Faith means belief, trust, confidence, assurance. To get an idea of what real, active faith is, associate it in your mind with will-power or determination. So closely are they connected that faith might be defined as will-power. "I know I can, and I will," expresses faith far better than "I think I can, and I'll try." The chief purpose in speaking upon the principle of faith here is to show why faith is necessary (which has already been done), and to tell how faith in the Lord and his teaching may be acquired and cultivated.

It is said that faith is a gift of God.

This does not mean that if we do not possess it we must wait until it is bestowed, by chance, perhaps, upon us without our seeking. Knowledge, wisdom, artistic talents, are all gifts of God, but they are only received through effort—by work and study. The Scriptures inform us that "faith comes by hearing." This is true. When a man who is seeking a fortune, for instance, hears where gold or other riches can be found plentifully, he hopes the news is true. For the time being he acts on the assumption that it is true; and being deeply interested in it he at once proceeds to investigate and prove it. He inquires about the statement he has heard; he thinks and studies about it constantly until he is satisfied in his mind as to its truth or falsity.

The same course should be taken to investigate the glad news of salvation. When one hears, if he desires his soul's salvation, he will hope it is true, and, hoping it is true, he will lay aside all prejudice and earnestly inquire after it, seek to understand it thoroughly by study, by prayer and by every means of investigation within his power. By taking this course his hope will be rewarded by an awakening faith, and as he proceeds to investigate that faith will grow and eventually mature into knowledge.

One should not expect his faith to grow without food and exercise. The study of the Scriptures provides food upon which man's faith can grow, and by putting the promises of the Lord to the test his faith is exercised. There are many tests by which our faith can

be proven. These tests will be apparent as one progresses in the study and practice of the gospel principles, for there are promises of blessings following obedience to each law or rule of the gospel. By exercising faith sufficient to obey these various laws the truth of the promises may be verified. In this way faith is developed, and it grows until it becomes a mighty power.

Righteous men, as the Scriptures record, have developed such faith that they were enabled to do wonderful deeds, such as healing the sick, casting out devils, raising the dead to life. By faith they have been enabled to converse with heavenly beings, and to receive revelations from the Lord.

These statements are not fables, but historical facts. They are the natural results of cultivated faith. What has

been done by the power of faith anciently has also been accomplished in this age, and can be done again by the same agency, for the fruits of faith are the results of a natural and eternal law.

In seeking to gain faith in the Lord and in his gospel plan it is not wise nor proper to listen to those who are opposed to the gospel. No matter how desirous one may be to hear both sides of the question, he cannot expect to give the truth a fair investigation by such a method. He should first obtain a full understanding of what the gospel is; and to do this he must not only learn its teachings but practice its principles in his daily life. Listening to the opposition will influence his mind in such a way that his faith will waver and cannot be concentrated; and it is

only by concentration that faith can be effective.

What is said in opposition to the gospel is based upon false grounds. Those who oppose it are misinformed or ill-informed as to its teachings, and they never can be fair in their opposition because of their ignorance of the principles they are attacking. No person would ever think of studying the principles of any science by listening to those who do not believe in that science, or who, in ignorance oppose it. The only way to master the science would be by accepting and practicing the teachings of the preceptor and leaving all objectors alone.

When a person has thoroughly assimilated the truths of the gospel and become converted to them there need be little danger in reading or listening

to arguments in opposition to them, for he is then prepared to refute the false charges made against them.

There is a possibility of losing faith after it is once obtained. As already stated, faith is awakened and strengthened by study and by activity in religious duties. When one, through neglect, or lack of desire, ceases to study spiritual truths, and fails to be active in the performance of spiritual duties, his faith weakens and he is more susceptible to temptations and sin. Inactivity leads to degeneartion, decay and death. By intelligent exercise of his muscles, a man may develop physical strength, but if he afterwards neglects physical exercise his body becomes weak, and subject to disease.

IX. REPENTANCE, THE SECOND STEP

Belief in art does not make an artist; belief in music does not make a musician; nor does belief in religion make a saint. What is most essential to make one an artist or a musician is practice. It is practice, too, that makes a saint. The practice necessary to become a saint involves what is called repentance. Repentance is the process of overcoming faults and weaknesses.

Faith in God naturally gives one a desire to place himself in harmony with his laws. Man's instinct leads him to seek advancement—to improve his condition. When he discovers a way for improvement, he desires to follow it. When one begins to investigate

the Lord's plan of life, and his faith has been awakened, he wants to follow that plan. To walk in the way of life eternal means to live in purity. It means that one shall be clean in all his habits and thoughts; and that he shall be honest, truthful, kind; in short, that he should do unto others as he would have them do unto him—to observe all the Christian virtues. To do this he must overcome his inclinations to disregard the rules of proper conduct.

No matter what station a person occupies in life, there are temptations to do wrong, and all mankind yield more or less to some of these temptations, and in early life form habits that need correcting. To lay aside these besetting evils is the second step on the way

to eternal life. This step is called repentance.

Repentance means more than sorrow for having committed sin; it means the overcoming of sin. Of all the steps to be taken on the way of salvation, repentance is one of the most important. It is not like some of the ordinances of the gospel that need be performed but once: it must be repeated continually, day after day and year after year, for evils and weaknesses of humanity cannot be overcome at once; their mastery is the work of a lifetime. When one ceases to repent he ceases to progress; for no one in this life becomes so perfect that he has no need for repentance. One of the chief purposes of man's existence on earth in mortality is to master his own evil inclinations and desires. By doing this

he prepares himself to appreciate and partake of the real joys of life.

The Scriptures inform us that "man is [exists] that he might have joy." He cannot have lasting joy or happiness in sinning, or while in a sinful state, but must rid himself of his sins; for so long as he has sins unconquered he is to that extent a slave or a subject of sin.

Repentance is the great saving principle. It is the only way whereby the atoning blood of Christ can be made effectual in remitting sin, and man cannot be saved in his sins, for salvation implies a condition free from sin and the consequence of sin, which is condemnation or death.

While faith is the first step towards salvation and precedes repentance, true repentance strengthens faith.

Without repentance faith cannot grow and bring forth fruit. It is useless to profess faith and fail to take the next step.

Repentance is as necessary to a person seeking salvation as practice or training is to one seeking proficiency in some art. Both are needed to overcome faults; and while the one brings skill to the hand or to the mind the other perfects the soul.

It may not be out of place here to offer a few suggestions as to how evil tendencies may be guarded against. It is always the easier to correct evil practices before they become settled habits.

A wrong act should be corrected as soon as possible after it is committed. If one yields to the temptation to tell a falsehood he should at once correct the wrong as far as it is in his power

to do so. The longer it is delayed the harder it will be to make right, and the less will be the inclination to do it. If led by temptation to steal, immediate restitution ought to be made; and so with every species of wrong doing; when one realizes the folly of his acts all amends possible should be made. By taking this course one's determination and ability to resist evil are strengthened. Those who commit great sins have first been guilty of smaller evils and not repented of them. Had they repented of the little faults the greater sins would most likely never have been committed.

Evils that are premeditated have their origin in the mind before they are actually committed. Evil thoughts need to be repented of, and the best way to banish such thoughts is to crowd

them out of the mind by thinking of good things. For this purpose good books should be read and conversation with pure-minded people should be sought.

When evil suggestions come to the heart one should call to mind who and what he is. He should consider what sorrow and disgrace a wrong step would bring upon himself and what humiliation it would cause his parents and brothers and sisters. He should remember his high destiny—that he is a son of God, and that it is within his power, by resisting evil, to be exalted in the celestial kingdom on high. If he will stop to reflect upon any of these matters he will receive assistance in resisting temptation. These things should be reflected upon when temptations are not at hand, so that in the

hour of temptation such thoughts will spring to the mind.

It is a mistake to expect to become fortified against evils by running into temptations. They should be avoided as much as possible. They will come frequently enough without being sought. It is a mistake to continue an evil practice, believing it can be stopped easily at any time. The practice soon becomes a habit, and then it requires strong will-power to break it. Users of liquor and tobacco delude themselves with the belief that they can cease the practice at any time. But every time they indulge in the use of these things the poison they take into their systems weakens their will-power, and the longer they continue, the more difficult it becomes to stop the practice.

One of the most admirable traits of character is self-control; and the way to acquire it is by doing things that are contrary to our natural inclinations, as, for example, if we are inclined to look for and speak of people's faults, we should look for their good qualities and speak of them; if our inclinations are towards idleness, physically or mentally, we should force ourselves to industry. It has been suggested by someone that every person ought every day to perform some beneficial act that is distasteful to him. This practice will afford a training that will be of great value.

X. BAPTISM, THE THIRD STEP

In business affairs men draw up contracts in writing, stating just what each of the parties agrees to do in the transactions to follow. Often these contracts are signed in presence of witnesses in testimony that they are made in good faith. Baptism is a contract or covenant, only it is attested in a different form. The person to be baptized covenants with his Maker that he will keep his commandments. The one officiating in the baptismal ceremony is the Lord's agent in this transaction. He has authority to act in the Lord's name, otherwise the ordinance would not be binding. He is also a witness to the agreement. While the agreement is not in writing, the fact of

the baptism is recorded in the books of the Church, and furthermore the nature of the ceremony is such that one cannot forget it, while written promises are often forgotten.

The third step on the way of eternal life is baptism. The word baptism originally meant immersion, and baptism for salvation was originally performed by immersing the candidate in water. The burying of the person in water and then raising him out of the water, in the baptismal ceremony, represents the burial and resurrection of Christ. After obeying the principles of faith and repentance, mankind are required to comply with the ordinance of baptism by immersion for the remission of their sins and for entrance into the Church of Christ.

This form of baptism was taught and

practiced by John the Baptist and by the Savior and his disciples. Jesus himself was baptized in this manner—not for the remission of sins, for he was without sin, but, as the Scripture says, to "fulfill all righteousness." He submitted to the ordinance as a pattern for mankind. "I am the way and the life," he said, and all who desire life eternal are expected to follow him.

In course of time the professed followers of Christ changed the ordinances of the gospel; and among other things they altered the form of baptism, and yet retained the name—baptism—for the altered ceremony. Some even taught that baptism was unnecessary and discarded the practice. These things were done without authority from heaven and without God's approval. The Prophet Joseph Smith

restored anew the old form of baptism, and was authorized of God to teach and administer it.

The revelations brought forth by Joseph Smith, as well as the Bible, teach that baptism by immersion is necssary for salvation. All mankind who have reached the age of accountability must be baptized. The modern revelations teach that children are to be baptized when eight years of age, and not in their infancy. They must be old enough to have understanding, to exercise faith and be capable of repentance.

While the Scriptures teach that baptism is for the remission of sins, it is not expected that a person be baptized every time he may fall into error or do a wrong act. Christ's atonement for sins was made but once, and that was

for the sins of all mankind, committed either before or after the time the atonement was made, provided they manifest their acceptance of that atonement by repenting of their sins, by being baptized and by obeying his other commandments. So, too, baptism, like the atonement, answers for sins committed either before or after the time the ceremony takes place, provided those sins are all repented of, and they are not such deadly sins as will deprive one of fellowship in the Church of Christ.

The question is often asked, Why is baptism necessary to salvation? The Scriptures do not fully answer this question. They inform us that without baptism no man can be saved. The assurance that the Lord commands it should be sufficient to bring compli-

ance. There are several reasons, however, why baptism is a wise provision. Some form of initiation into the Church of Christ is evidently needed, and this symbol of the Savior's burial and resurrection is certainly beautiful, simple and appropriate. It is also impressive, and as it cannot be performed without attention and preparation, it is not likely to be forgotten. Baptism is a good test of one's willingness to give obedience. The gospel demands many acts of obedience from those who accept it, and it is well that this test of their disposition to obey is made at the time they enter the Church.

When a person is admitted into the Church by baptism he solemnly covenants with the Lord to keep his commandments. He is placed upon his honor to do this, and knowing that it is

a sacred obligation, he feels more determined to observe the laws of God than he would if no such promise were made. Men who have regard for the integrity of their own promises will not break them for trifling causes. The covenant made in baptism, therefore, fortifies one against evils and temptations, because his honor is at stake.

The manner of baptism, and the words to be used in performing the ceremony are given in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, section twenty, and verses seventy-two to seventy-four, as follows:

"Baptism is to be administered in the following manner unto all those who repent:

"The person who is called of God, and has authority from Jesus Christ to baptize, shall go down into the water

with the person who has presented him or herself for baptism, and shall say, calling him or her by name—Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

"Then shall he immerse him or her in the water, and come forth again out of the water."

As baptism is essential to salvation, the question arises, How are those to be saved who die without the opportunity of hearing the gospel and of being baptized? The Lord has provided a way for their salvation. The doctrine of baptism for the dead was taught in the ancient Church of Christ, and it has been revealed anew to the Church of Christ in these latter days. Those who die without hearing the gospel in

this life will have the privilege of hearing it in the spirit life. If they so desire they can accept it there, and the ordinance of baptism can be performed here on earth in their behalf by their descendants, relatives or friends; and this vicarious work, like that done by the Savior, in atoning for man's sins, will be acceptable unto the Lord.

XI. CONFIRMATION, THE FOURTH STEP

The ordinance of the laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost is the fourth step on the way of eternal life. It is just as essential to salvation as is baptism of water, and is regarded as a part of the baptismal ceremony. In the Scriptures the one is called the baptism of water and the other the baptism of fire and the Holy Ghost. The confirmation, by the laying on of hands, of those who are baptized, is a part of the ceremony by which they are made members of the Church of Christ. The words used by the officiating elder in the ordinance indicate this: "In the name of Jesus

Christ, I confirm you a member of the Church of Jesus Christ," etc.

The reasons why baptism is required as given in the last chapter, may also apply to confirmation by the laying on of hands. The ordinance is a further test of one's faith and obedience. And evidently this is very necessary, for there are many people who confess faith in God's word but are not willing to believe it sufficiently to accept the baptism of water and of the Holy Ghost. This unwillingness to obey shows that their faith is an empty profession by which they deceive themselves.

By complying with the commandments of the Lord the blessings promised on condition of obedience are received; and thereby one receives assurance that he is taking the right course

—that he is on the way of eternal life. The promises made by the Lord are that those who in sincerity obey the principles of faith, repentance, baptism, and have hands laid on them by his authorized servants, shall receive the Holy Ghost; and that when they do receive that Spirit he will "teach them all things," will guide them "into all truth," will testify of Christ, will show them "things to come," thus proving to them that their course is approved of the Lord.

The Holy Ghost is promised as a guide and a comforter to those who accept the gospel. The Scriptures inform us that by or through the Holy Spirit men receive wisdom, knowledge, the gift of healing, the working of miracles, the gifts of prophecy, of speaking in tongues, etc.; and further,

that the "fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness," etc.

While these great blessings are promised to those who obey the gospel, they do not always immediately follow the administering of the ordinance of laying on of hands for the gift of the Holy Ghost. They are given according to the individual's needs and according to his diligence in seeking for them. Nor are all the special spiritual gifts bestowed upon one person. As the scriptures state, they are distributed, or given "to every man severally as he will." Mankind differ in their desires and inclinations. Some desire one particular gift more than they do others, and therefore they seek that for which they have a liking; and by seeking they obtain that which they wish. The

words of the Savior, "ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you," are true. Men receive those things they strive for. Those who seek for good find it, and those who seek for evil find it. It is also true of the gifts of the Spirit. They are received by those who diligently search for them.

We are told in modern revelation to "seek learning by study, also by faith." In this way the gifts of the Spirit should be sought. One cannot expect to receive them without effort. They would not be properly appreciated nor would they be held sacred were they given without the asking.

The purpose of spiritual gifts in the Church is that the Saints might be comforted, instructed and encouraged. They serve to give assurance from day

to day that the recipients are in harmony with their heavenly Father, and that he approves of their course. They are promised to those who obey the gospel, and when they are received they give assurance that the great promises —of salvation and exaltation—will eventually be fulfilled.

While special gifts of the Spirit are distributed among the members of the Church, and not all are enjoyed by one member, every one is entitled to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit sufficiently to assure him that he has taken the right steps to secure salvation. In other words, he should have a "testimony of the truth of the gospel." This testimony may not be strong at first, but it will grow stronger as one gains further experience and understanding.

It will increase as one studies and works for the cause of salvation.

The greatest assurance men have of the truth of religion is that given through the Holy Spirit. As already stated, some of the "fruits of the Spirit" are love, peace, joy, etc. When one is actuated by that Spirit his heart is filled with love for mankind. He has no ill-will towards anyone; his soul is full of joy and his mind is at peace. He is satisfied that his course is approved of Heaven, and his desires are to do good to all.

XII. REVERENCE

The ten commandments given to the ancient Israelites are still in force, and obedience to them is essential to salvation. The third commandment which reads, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain," demands consideration, and is to be observed with the other commandments. The Savior taught his disciples that swearing was wrong, for he said, "Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne: nor by the earth; for it is his footstool." He said further that "every idle word that men shall speak, they shall give account thereof in the day of judgment."

Profaning the name of the Lord is inexcusable. It does not gratify one's desire for wealth, power or glory; nor does it satisfy any bodily appetite. It adds nothing to the charm of one's personality nor to the force of his utterances. The same may be said of all species of profanity. The only excuse for its use is that the habit is easily formed and cannot be overcome without effort. When a person deliberately profanes the Lord's name it is evident that he has no reverence for Deity. If he has no such reverence he never can advance spiritually. And is he not already damned? For until he changes his course he never can pursue the way of eternal life. How can a man love the Lord with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind, which Jesus says is the first great com-

mandment, when he holds his sacred name in derision? Even in prayer the name of Deity should not be repeated unnecessarily or in vain. Profanity and irreverence are highly offensive to those who have regard for that which is sacred, and those who are guilty of it manifest a lack of respect both towards their fellows and towards their Creator.

Irreverence, like other evils, is the fruit of ignorance. The slightest acquaintance with the character of Deity is sufficient to awaken one's sense of reverence. Nature is the Creator's handiwork. In all its forms it commands the admiration of man, if he will but consider it. No one speaks disrespectfully of that which he admires, therefore one who uses lightly the name of the Creator is ignorant or

wilfully base. Swearing in general, aside from profaning the name of the Lord, is evil in itself; and it leads to the greater evil of blaspheming the Holy Name. Oaths are idle words, if nothing worse, and men are to give account for "every idle word." Men's characters are affected by their thoughts, their words and their acts; and by their character shall they be judged, or in the language of Scripture they shall be judged according to their works.

As there is nothing to be gained and much to be lost by profanity it should be avoided continually. Guard against its use in your conversation, and discountenance it in others.

Consider how offensive it would be to hear men continually repeating your father's or your mother's name in com-

mon conversation, and that in the most disrespectful manner! All who regard their parents with proper honor and love resent such insults.

The more one studies the word and works of the Lord the greater will be his reverence, and the stronger will be his desire to walk in the footsteps of the Master and to become like him; and by maintaining an attitude of reverence in the presence of the thoughtlessly profane may influence them to reform. Those who are viciously irreverent should be shunned.

Reverence for God will inspire respect for his earthly representatives, and for holy places and sacred ceremonies.

XIII. PRAYER

No one can keep safely in the way of salvation or eternal life without the aid of prayer. It is an essential part of true worship. It is natural for mankind to pray. The child appeals to its parents for those things it is unable to procure by its own efforts, and it shows gratitude for what it receives, and these are the essentials of prayer. People in a community pray to or petition their governing officials of city or state for that which they want done and cannot do for themselves.

All mankind whose minds are in a normal condition, perform this part of worship in some manner, whether they believe in or deny the existence of God. They all pray, though they

may not do so audibly in words, and they may not address any being. The constant wishing for some desired object is prayer in a simple form: as the poet has said, "Prayer is the soul's sincere desire, unuttered or expressed."

Men, too, like children, are naturally filled with gratitude and thanksgiving when their prayers are answered, and the things desired are received. Showing that the spirit of prayer is inherent in man.

Prayer of itself is beneficial. The constant desire, "unuttered or expressed," for a certain object helps one to concentrate his efforts till the attainment of the object is accomplished.

The great purpose of prayer is to gain divine assistance—to get the power we of ourselves do not possess. Without this help we are not able to do our full

duty in life, because we cannot make the progress that is within our power when we do seek divine aid. Without prayer we neglect our duty and forget our destiny. We lose courage and give up our high ambitions and drift aimlessly through life. Prayer should be a part of the moral code. No one can reach the highest ideal of morality if he ignore the means by which that condition may be attained.

In prayer we not only ask the Lord for assistance but also express to him our gratitude for blessings received. If we fail to do this, we are guilty of ingratitude, and ingratitude is a serious breach of morality.

After what has been said as to the purpose of prayer, it may not be necessary to say much about the form of appealing to Heaven. There need be no

set form of prayer. Upon each occasion we should ask our Heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, for such assistance as is needed, and we should always express our thanks and praise to God for all his goodness to us—not as a matter of form, but from our hearts, and there can be no one who has not occasion to be grateful to him for blessings received.

Prayers are not always answered immediately; nor at all times are they answered in the manner anticipated. This should not be expected. One may not be prepared to receive at once the things asked for, or the answer he expects may not be the one best suited to his condition. The Lord should be trusted by his children, with the full confidence that he will grant their requests at the proper time according to

his allwise judgment, and in the wisest manner known to him.

When one fails to receive a direct answer to prayer it is always well to be patient and not hastily conclude that the Lord does not hear him. Let him reconsider his petition: Would he be benefited by having his desire granted? Mankind are changeable. Today a person may want one thing and tomorrow something else. Children ask their parents for all kinds of things with little thought of the benefit to be had if their wishes were granted. Their parents are not sure that the children really desire what they ask, so they wait until their children's minds are settled upon something which they actually want; and when the parents are satisfied that the children are earnest in their appeals and that what they

seek would be good for them to possess they try to supply it. May not our Heavenly Parent deal similarly with his children?

XIV. CHURCH ORGANIZATION AND DIVINE AUTHORITY

"Why should I belong to a church?" one sometimes will ask; "I try to live a good life and do right by my neighbors. What more should I do?"

This life is a preparatory school. Mankind are placed in this world to prepare themselves for heaven. Heaven is understood to be a place of perfect order. Without order it could not be a place of happiness. To prepare for such a state of existence as is believed to be in heaven, is it not needful that we learn to be orderly here? To be orderly we must learn to submit to authority—to obey those we accept as leaders. Those who will not submit to the laws of civilization are called outlaws, and are not

permitted to the freedom of law-abiding citizens; and those who will not learn to love and respect the laws of heaven can never be permitted to enter.

The true followers of Christ must be organized into a body or church, with officers to govern them. They cannot satisfactorily worship God separately. Individuals are mistaken when they think they can serve the Lord acceptably by themselves, or that they can gain life eternal by simply trying to live a good, moral life, unaided by the means God has given for their use. For with all the safeguards of the Church organization and its ordinances men stray from the way which leads to eternal life.

There are several reasons why the Saints of God should be organized into

a church, and walk unitedly in the way of salvation. To make progress in righteousness, they must be continually taught and reminded of their obligations, those who are spiritually weak need to be strengthened by the assistance of those who are stronger; and the poor and unfortunate must be provided for. Without organization, these things cannot be attended to effectually.

As a part of their duty, and as a necessity for their own salvation, the Saints are required to lead others to the light of the gospel by preaching the good tidings of salvation in the world, for they cannot gain eternal life by selfishly living in seclusion, and they can best accomplish this work of teaching the gospel by organized effort. In all ages, the true worshipers of God have been ridiculed and persecuted by

their opponents. For mutual encouragement and protection it is to their interest to be united in an organized capacity.

It is evident that without organization and unity little can be done for man's salvation, spiritually or temporally, no matter how sincere one's desires may be to do good in the service of the Lord.

The true worshipers of God have always been organized into a church, and those who desire to serve him are required to unite with his Church, otherwise they are not recognized as followers of Christ. The Lord has revealed the pattern for his Church, and has taught how it shall be conducted. He has placed officers in the Church, having specific duties to perform, so that all things can be con-

ducted in order. These officers are clothed with the priesthood, which is authority to act in the name of the Lord.

It must be understood that wherever the Church of God is to be found there are men chosen of him to act as his agents upon the earth. In the days of the Savior's ministry among the Jews, he called men and ordained them to the ministry. The men who stood at the head of the Church after Christ's resurrection and ascension were the apostles Peter, James and John. Those same apostles, as resurrected beings, appeared to Joseph Smith and Oliver Cowdery at the time of the establishment of the Church of Christ in these latter days, and conferred authority upon them to act in the name of the Lord; and these men, in turn, ordained

others to the priesthood, and so the authority has been continued to this day.

The acts of these divinely authorized men are recognized of the Lord and what they do by virtue of their calling and in righteousness and humility is of equal force as if the Lord performed those acts himself. When the presidency of the Church—the men who are chosen of the Lord and accepted by the members of his Church to direct the affairs thereof—call upon the people to perform certain works, that call is the same as though it came direct from the Lord to his people. It is the same when other men in authority make a request of those under their care, and these calls should be regarded by the people as coming from the Lord, because they are from his authorized

servants whom they covenant to uphold and sustain. Should members disregard these regulations there could be no order in the Church.

Because obedience to properly constituted authority must be insisted upon, it is not expected that this should be blind obedience. It is the privilege of every individual in the Church of Christ to live closely in touch with the policy and movements of the Church leaders, so that he may give intelligent obedience to any and every requirement made of him. This can be done by the member making himself familiar with the doctrines and practices and order of the Church and by holding himself in communion with the Holy Spirit, and ever being engaged in active service for the building up of the Church. This suggests that to be a true

follower of Christ one must be studious, prayerful and ever awake to the promptings of the Holy Spirit. "A man cannot be saved in ignorance."

The only course to pursue for self-development is to respond when called to service by those in authority. The more one seeks to perform service assigned to him the greater will be his ability to meet such requirements in the future. On the other hand, the refusal or failure to respond to calls made hinders one's advancement. This same rule will apply to secular work or business of any kind.

XV. REVELATION

Belief in continuous revelation is a distinct feature of the true Church. Christ's Church on earth is always in communication with its Divine Head. Without revelation from the Lord it could make no progress, and in time it would lose its divine power. Its high aims would be lost sight of, its forms changed and its practices perverted. This has been the case in past ages when revelation ceased in the Church. Uninspired men taught conflicting doctrines and led their followers away from the true gospel teachings. As long as the Church is acknowledged of Heaven it relies upon divine inspiration for the guidance of its affairs. Men cannot direct aright the Church of

Christ without continued communication with him. The directions given to the Church in past ages will not do for this day. They are not to be had in their fulness in the Holy Scriptures, and even if they were all preserved to our time, they would apply to the present needs only in a general way. Christ's Church is progressive, and its needs today are different from those of the past; and later it will need other instructions. This was true of the Church in former times. The Savior, during his ministry on earth, first directed his disciples to go and teach the gospel to the house of Israel only, saying: "Go not into the way of the gentiles * * * but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel" (Matt. 10:5, 6). Later he told the disciples to go "into all the world, and

preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:16). It appears they did not fully understand this—that they should go to the Gentiles—and after the Lord's ascension into heaven it was necessary for them to receive further revelation regarding the preaching of the gospel to others than the house of Israel. Peter the chief apostle, received a revelation by way of a heavenly vision wherein he was told to carry the message of salvation to Cornelius, who was a Gentile (Acts 10). In the Church of the present day, revelation has been received from time to time directing the course to be pursued. In the early years after its organization, men were divinely sent to preach the gospel in the various States of the east. Later, the Prophet Joseph Smith was inspired of the Lord to send the glad

message to Great Britain and to other parts of the world. By the spirit of revelation the Church was directed to move as a body, first from New York to Kirtland, Ohio, then to Missouri, later to Nauvoo, Illinois, and finally to the Rocky Mountains, where it was predicted by revelation that the Saints would become a mighty people.

All through its history the Church has been guided by revelation. Every man that has stood at the head of the Church has had the inspiration of the Lord to direct the movements of the Church. This is not all; men in subordinate positions of authority in the Church receive revelation to guide them and those under their care. Missionaries sent abroad to teach the gospel are led by that same heavenly inspiration to the homes of people who

are prepared to receive their message. Every member of the Church who has accepted the gospel with a sincere heart is entitled to revelation through the Holy Spirit for his own guidance, to witness to him that the teachings of the Church are true—to assure him that the leaders of the Church are divinely acknowledged, and to enlighten his mind upon all matters pertaining to his welfare. No one in the Church need serve the Lord blindly. By seeking in prayer and humility he can know for himself that his service is acceptable unto the Lord.

XVI. JOSEPH SMITH AND THE LATTER-DAY CHURCH

The way of eternal life was the message which Christ and his apostles proclaimed to the world. Those who accepted their message were received into the Church of Christ; but in time, owing to persecution and a falling away from the faith, the true way of salvation was lost sight of. The gospel and the authority to administer its ordinances were taken from the earth, and then followed a long period of spiritual darkness. Strange, unauthorized doctrines were introduced into the Church and observed as gospel requirements; and men officiated in holy ordinances without having authority so to do.

The important mission entrusted to Joseph Smith was to re-establish the Church of Christ upon the earth; and the strongest visible evidence of his divine calling is the Church itself.

To the misinformed, the Church he was instrumental in restoring, commonly known in the world as the "Mormon" Church, is a system cunningly devised to deceive and defraud the ignorant, the superstitious and the unwary. To the fair-minded seeker after truth it is a marvel and a wonder—an organization possessed of the elements capable of reforming the world of mankind, individually and collectively, and of correcting all its evils.

While the Church is not numbered with those great religious bodies that count their followers by the millions, it is great in power. It possesses within

it the "power of God unto salvation;" and the salvation it offers is not merely an assurance of future happiness, but a guarantee of safety and protection from present ills. In this world of turmoil, anxiety, fear and uncertainty, it gives peace, contentment and happiness. It enlightens the mind, broadens the soul and satisfies all the righteous aspirations of the human heart. From the cradle to the grave it safeguards its members. At the same time it affords environment most favorable to spiritual and intellectual growth.

The Church requires that a child born to parents who are members be taken before the Elders and blessed, and a record of its birth, its name and its parents' names kept on the Church records; thus, from the earliest period of its life the child is recognized as a

prospective member of the Church and a candidate for salvation. The Church requires that parents shall teach their children to understand the doctrines of repentance, faith in Christ, the Son of God, and of baptism and the gift of the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. These instructions are to be imparted to the children before they are eight years old, for at eight years they are, if thus taught, subjects for baptism and confirmation, and by complying with these ordinances they become members of the Church.

As aids to the parents in training their children, the Church has established the Sunday School, the Primary Association, and the Religion Class. At the age of twelve years the children are eligible to membership in the Mutual Improvement Association.

The boys at this age are also privileged to be ordained to the Priesthood, which entitles them to take part in Church administration. As they grow older, they advance from the offices of the lesser to those of the higher Priesthood; and while they are being trained in Church government and doctrine they are assisting in the conduct of Church affairs, and teaching its doctrines.

Then, again, the Church provides schools for the education of its members in secular as well as religious matters. It recognizes the truth that no education without religious training is complete—that true religion is a system for the spiritual, moral, mental, and physical development of mankind.

The missionary work of the Church gives its members further opportunity

to educate and improve themselves while at the same time they are carrying the message of salvation to others. And those who are brought into the fold through the teachings of these missionaries, are nurtured with equal care as are those born of parents in the Church.

Besides all this, the Church prescribes rules of conduct respecting man's diet and habits of living that insure to him the greatest degree of bodily health and cleanliness; and bodily health is what aids largely in securing spiritual health. By observing the teaching of that unique revelation given through the Prophet, and known as the "Word of Wisdom," the members of the Church escape the evils of intemperance and other excesses that destroy the souls of mankind. In short, the

teachings of the Church, if accepted by mankind, will solve all the menacing problems of humanity. Its marriage rules will prevent the intermixing of the white and colored races; and the high moral standards required of its members will settle the question of eugenics in the only way it can be settled. Its methods of providing for the poor and unfortunate will relieve the extreme suffering that exists among the poverty-stricken classes.

While the Church provides for the salvation of mankind in this world—salvation from its physical and moral evils—it provides means for their spiritual training that they might be fitted for salvation in the hereafter. Its doctrines of salvation form a system that is orderly and complete—orderly because they consist of progressive steps in the

line of advancement, and complete because they provide for the salvation of all—not only the living but also the dead who die without the privilege of receiving the teachings and ordinances of salvation in this life.

Such is the character of Christ's Church, established through the agency of Joseph Smith, who was commissioned of Heaven to perform the work. It is the greatest and most perfect organization on earth, and its existence is a standing, visible evidence of the inspiration of its founder.

XVII. THE SABBATH AND PUBLIC WORSHIP

The Lord commanded His people anciently to "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Many of the people in what are known as Christian countries seek to keep the Sabbath day holy according to their understanding of it, and they are convinced that they are blest in doing so. By resting from their labors one day in seven, they have found physical benefit, and the change from the daily routine of labor enables them to accomplish as much in the six days as they would were they to work seven days without any change or rest; so they lose nothing in a material way by observing this law.

But the physical benefit, although

important, is not all that one receives from a proper observance of the Sabbath. Sunday is a day for spiritual refreshing. The modern commandment concerning the observance of this day is given in a revelation to the Prophet Joseph Smith as follows:

"And that thou mayest more fully keep thyself unspotted from the world, thou shalt go to the house of prayer and offer up thy sacraments upon my holy day;

"For verily this is a day appointed unto you to rest from your labors, and to pay thy devotions unto the Most High;

"Nevertheless thy vows shall be offered up in righteousness on all days and at all times;

"But remember that on this the Lord's day, thou shalt offer thine obla-

tions and thy sacraments unto the Most High, confessing thy sins unto thy brethren, and before the Lord.

"And on this day thou shalt do none other thing, only let thy food be prepared with singleness of heart that thy fasting may be perfect, or, in other words, that thy joy may be full" (Doctrine and Covenants Sec. 59, verses 9-13).

What is meant by keeping "unspotted from the world" is to be free from the sins of the worldly-minded, or those who fear not God and keep not his commandments. The safest way to keep free from these sins is to observe the Sabbath in the way the Lord has prescribed. It is a very easy matter for one who neglects to keep holy the Lord's day to fall into other sins, and to forget all his religious obligations;

and those who break the Sabbath are generally found guilty of other wrong doing.

"There is a law, irrevocably decreed in heaven before the foundations of this world, upon which all blessings are predicated; and when we obtain any blessing from God, it is by obedience to that law upon which it is predicated" (Doctrine and Covenants 130: 20, 21).

There are blessings promised to those who keep sacred the Lord's day. To receive these blessings one must comply with the law, for, according to the above quotation, it is only by obedience to that particular law that these specific blessings are to be obtained.

Other advantages of Sabbath observance are spiritual health and activity. Man's spiritual being needs food

as well as does his physical. By attending the meetings held for public worship one is spiritually refreshed; he is reminded of and encouraged to perform his religious obligations. It is not enough to only rest from manual labor on the Sabbath day. One should associate with his brethren and sisters in public worship, thereby showing that he enjoys fellowship with them and that he and they may be mutually edified.

If preparation for observing the Sabbath as a day of rest and worship be made on Saturday, there will be no need of doing unnecessary work on Sunday. The old-time custom of cleaning up, cooking, mending and bathing on Saturday should still be practiced, then there would be nothing to hinder a proper observance of the Lord's day.

Saturday night parties, entertainments or excursions are out of place and exhibit bad taste. Shopping at a late hour on Saturday night is unnecessary and is an injustice to the employes of mercantile establishments, as it prevents them from keeping the Sabbath day holy. True, many of them rest on the Sabbath, after being prevented from resting the night before, but they often feel too tired to attend the services on the Lord's holy day.

XVIII. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The sacrament of the Lord's Supper is an ordinance of the Church of Christ. Jesus himself instituted it in the Church in former days, and he has commanded that it should be practiced by his Saints of latter days.

It is unnecessary here to give the history of this sacrament or to explain its manner of administration. The purpose of it is stated in the revealed form of blessings to be asked upon the emblems to be partaken of—the bread and the water. This purpose is that the Saints might keep in mind their Redeemer and the atonement he made for them, and show their willingness to take upon them his name; that is, to acknowledge him by being members

of his Church—the Church of Jesus Christ—and that they might always remember him and keep his commandments, that his Spirit might always be with them.

As has been before stated, the atonement of Christ is the greatest factor in the plan of salvation, and the Lord's supper is a memorial of the great sacrifice. By ever keeping it in mind helps one to appreciate the benefits of the atonement, and to live a life worthy of those benefits. By continually showing our fellowship with the members of Christ's Church by partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's supper we are constantly impressed with the necessity of fulfilling the duties of Saints. And this is needful, for unless we are frequently reminded of our duties we forget them. Like other

sacred ceremonies of the Church, the sacrament of the Lord's supper serves as a safeguard to the Saints.

It is required of all Saints that they partake of the sacrament of the Lord's supper worthily. That is, that their hearts be clean. If they have sinned they must repent of that sin. If they have offended others, or have ill-feelings towards any one on account of wrongs either real or imaginary, they should be reconciled before partaking of the sacrament. This is a proper and wise requirement. Misunderstandings should be settled and misdeeds corrected promptly, and not allowed to increase and cause greater bitterness of heart between brothers and sisters. "Let not the sun go down upon your wrath," says the Apostle Paul (Eph. 4:26).

XIX. FASTING

There is a reason for every regulation in the Church of Christ, and every requirement is for a purpose; and it is always a source of satisfaction to know the purpose for which a practice is followed.

In the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, one day each month is set apart as a day of fasting. Usually this is the first Sunday in the month. It is expected of the Saints that on this day they will not partake of food until after the close of the fast day service, which is held in the afternoon. The Saints are also expected to give as an offering for the assistance of the poor and unfortunate an amount at least equal to the average cost of two

meals. "Thou wilt remember the poor, and consecrate of thy properties for their support" (Doctrine and Covenants 42:30). This contribution, as can readily be seen, works no hardship upon anyone.

The practice of fasting is beneficial in several ways. Those who are well fed are benefited physically by allowing their digestive organs an occasional rest. And by fasting they can enter more fully into the feelings of those who are poorly fed on account of unfortunate conditions. Fasting awakens sympathy for the poor; and it is the part of a Saint's life to cultivate this virtue—to be considerate and mindful of the needs of others.

Many persons have sought and received special blessings from the Lord through fasting and prayer. By fast-

ing they have been enabled to better concentrate their faith upon the object they desired. Upon one occasion the disciples of Jesus asked why they could not cast out an evil spirit with which a certain individual was afflicted. The Master replied that such spirits could only be cast out by prayer and fasting.

XX. MARRIAGE

In the world generally marriage is regarded as a civil ceremony. It is a mutual contract or agreement between the man and the woman to live together as husband and wife while life may last. Very properly, the Church of Jesus Christ recognizes such marriages as valid and binding, according to the contract made. But the true marriage contract is an institution of heaven, and is a uniting of husband and wife not for this life only, but for all eternity. "Marriage is ordained of God," says the book of Doctrine and Covenants (49:15); and, in the revelation on the eternity of the marriage covenant, it further says:

"Therefore, if a man marry him a

wife in the world, and he marry her not by me, nor by my word; and he covenant with her so long as he is in the world, and she with him, their covenant and marriage are not of force when they are dead, and when they are out of the world; therefore, they are not bound by any law when they are out of the world;

"Therefore, when they are out of the world, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage; but are appointed angels in heaven, which angels are ministering servants, to minister for those who are worthy of a far more, and an exceeding, and an eternal weight of glory;

"For these angels did not abide my law, therefore they cannot be enlarged, but remain separately and singly, without exaltation, in their saved condition,

to all eternity, and from henceforth are not Gods, but are angels of God, for ever and ever.

"And again, verily I say unto you, if a man marry a wife, and make a covenant with her for time and for all eternity, if that covenant is not by me, or by my word, which is my law, and is not sealed by the Holy Spirit of promise, through him whom I have anointed and appointed unto this power—then it is not valid, neither of force when they are out of the world, because they are not joined by me, saith the Lord, neither by my word; when they are out of the world, it cannot be received there, because the angels and the Gods are appointed there, by whom they cannot pass; they cannot, therefore, inherit my glory, for my house is a house

of order, saith the Lord God (Doc. and Cov. 132:15-18).

In order to be sealed in marriage for eternity by the authority of the holy priesthood, a man and woman must be worthy of a recommendation for that purpose. This worthiness must be exhibited by their conduct in life. They are expected to have complied in all sincerity with the initiatory ordinances of the gospel, and to observe the Church rules of conduct. The covenants they make previous to being sealed in marriage are of the most solemn nature, and unless their lives have been pure and exemplary before entering into these covenants they will not likely be able to abide by the agreements they enter into before the Lord; and it is a most serious matter to break

the promises made before heaven and its authority here on earth.

While it is a serious matter to make covenants in the house of the Lord, the making of such in full integrity and understanding adds strength to one's determination to do right. The covenant to do right places one on his honor, and by keeping that covenant ever in mind he will be better able to live righteously than he would had he never made it.

The sacred ordinance or endowment one receives previous to marriage in the house of the Lord, like the covenant of baptism, and like the covenant of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, is intended to serve as a safeguard on the path of eternal life. Like a handrail on a footbridge, it protects them from falling from the narrow way.

Young men and women in choosing companions in contemplation of matrimony, should keep in mind that the proper marriage is that of the Lord's holy house—the marriage for eternity. Marriage should be considered seriously, and not entered hastily or without due preparation. Young men and young women in the Church ought to so live that they may be worthy of admission to the temples of the Lord.

For the sake of domestic happiness in this life, people should marry those of their own faith. Differences in religious belief are ever causes of contention in a family. Young men and women should seek their choice of companions from among their equals in their own communities as far as possible. There is more safety in this; being brought up in the same community

they are likely to have similar tastes and habits, and they will the more likely be better acquainted with each other's ways before marriage. Besides, they can know of the character of the families with which they make alliances. Marriage with one who is a stranger or from a strange nation is attended with great risks because of the dissimilarity of training and ideals. Intermarriage with the colored race is forbidden by the laws of God and frequently by the laws of man.

XXI. TITHING

It has already been stated that it is necessary for the true worshipers of God to be organized into a corporate body, called a church, or, more correctly, the Church of Jesus Christ.

The reasons for this organization have also been presented. To conduct the affairs of the Church requires means, and the Lord has revealed that the members of his Church shall pay one-tenth of their income for the support of it. This principle is called the law of tithing. It is a just law, as it is fair to the rich and the poor. While the poor man who pays the tenth part of his interest does not give the same amount as the rich tithe-payer does, he is entitled to the same blessings, be-

cause he has done as much in proportion to what he earns.

The law of tithing is difficult for some to comply with, because it is a sacrifice of one's means apparently without a return of material benefit. I say *apparently* without return of material benefit, yet the faithful and sincere paying of tithes often does bring material benefits in return, but not always immediately. The farmer does not get returns at once when he plants his seeds. He sacrifices his labor and the money he pays for seeds, and trusts in the Lord for future returns. And as sure as he is rewarded for the apparent sacrifice he makes, so sure is the tithe-payer rewarded for his trust in the Lord. He may not always receive temporal benefits for observing the law. But there are other blessings

far greater than material wealth. Spiritual success and prosperity ought to be prized far above worldly riches.

The paying of tithes helps one in making the best use of his money. In order that he might have the means with which to pay tithing, he watches carefully his expenditures; and it is as important to look to the spending as to the earning of money.

It has been learned by experience that, as a rule, those in the Church who are observers of the law of tithing are most faithful in keeping other commandments of the Lord. It serves, therefore, as an index to their faith in God and his Church. To profess faith in the gospel and at the same time refuse to comply with this law is inconsistent.

The observance of the law of tithing

helps to free one from selfishness; and in order to keep in the way of eternal life a man must be unselfish. He must be willing to give all he has for the precious jewel of eternal life.

The law of tithing as contained in the Doctrine and Covenants, is as follows:

"Verily, thus saith the Lord, I require all their surplus property to be put into the hands of the bishop of my church of Zion,

"For the building of mine house, and for the laying of the foundation of Zion and for the Priesthood, and for the debts of the Presidency of my church;

"And this shall be the beginning of the tithing of my people;

"And after that, those who have thus been tithed, shall pay one-tenth of

all their interest annually; and this shall be a standing law unto them for ever, for my holy priesthood, saith the Lord.

"Verily I say unto you, it shall come to pass, that all those who gather unto the land of Zion shall be tithed of their surplus properties, and shall observe this law, or they shall not be found worthy to abide among you.

"And I say unto you, if my people observe not this law, to keep it holy, and by this law sanctify the land of Zion unto me, that my statutes and my judgments may be kept thereon, that it may be most holy, behold, verily I say unto you, it shall not be a land of Zion unto you;

"And this shall be an ensample unto all the Stakes of Zion. Even so. Amen" (Doc. and Cov. 119).

Everyone who has an income, which includes every wage-earner, is expected to comply with this law. Boys and girls who earn or receive means regularly or occasionally are subject to this rule. The best way to receive training in the practice of this law of the Lord is for the young members of the Church to begin paying tithing when they first receive money for their labor. It should be paid as it is received, weekly or monthly as the case may be. It is easier to keep the law by beginning in this way. The practice soon becomes a habit; and the habit of saving and making good use of money is formed at the same time.

XXII. THE WORD OF WISDOM

What is known as the Word of Wisdom, is a revelation given by the Lord to his Church, through the Prophet Joseph Smith, telling them what is good and also what is not good for food. It is found in the book of Doctrine and Covenants, beginning on page 321, and comprises the whole of Section 89. The revelation first warns the Saints against those things that are not good for the use of man, such as wine and strong drinks, hot drinks, tobacco, and the eating of much meat. It also tells what foods are good for mankind, as well as what is proper food for domestic animals and fowls. It concludes by promising great blessings to those who observe its teachings and keep the com-

mandments of the Lord. The revelation is plain and should be read carefully by everyone. It is a most wonderful revelation—wonderful because it gives the most essential rules for health in such few words. Surely it is a word of wisdom; and those who accept it and follow its teachings are wise in doing so. And the promises of health and treasures of knowledge which it holds out are certainly realized by those who seek them.

The observance of the Word of Wisdom helps greatly towards supplying physical and moral strength to keep the other commandments of the Lord, and is therefore of much importance to everyone who is trying to walk in the way of eternal life.

The using of such articles as the Word of Wisdom forbids is common to

mankind, and many of the Saints who have been trained in the ways of the world have formed the habit of partaking of such things, and often they find it hard to overcome their habits; but it is an easy matter for the children of Latter-day Saints to keep free from such habits. The articles mentioned as being unfit for the use of man are not attractive to the tastes of children, and it is necessary to be trained to like them, hence, to avoid their use is easy. The removal of these evils from the lives of the youth of Zion makes them the most blessed and favored children in all the world, and gives them an advantage that will enable them the more easily to keep the laws of God and gain salvation in his presence.

No good reason can be given to justify the use of things forbidden by the

Word of Wisdom. They injure the body and the mind, and deaden the spiritual senses. Many who use them make the excuse that they cannot overcome the habit. This is proof that their will-power is weak; and if they have not the power to overcome the appetite for such forbidden articles they are not likely to be able to resist other evils. There are others who claim that they indulge only moderately in the use of liquors, tobacco, or hot drinks, and that they can lay them aside at any time. This is an unsafe course to pursue. The habit of using these or any other drugs grows upon a person, and before he is aware it has such a strong hold upon him that he cannot overcome it. Evils should never be trifled with, and temptations are to be avoided from the beginning. Curiosity to know the nature

of an evil ought never to be gratified.

Observance of the condition of those who yield to drug habits and intemperance should be sufficient warning to any young person. When you see one who has lost all self-respect through giving way to vice, be convinced that it will be only a matter of time when you will be in a similar condition if you take the same course.

One day a young man of respectability went into a saloon to take a drink. He only went occasionally to such places and had not formed a regular habit of drinking. A poor, despised sot approached him and said, "Won't you set 'em up, pard?"

"What!" exclaimed the young man with disgust, "do you think I would drink with such a degraded fellow as you!" The inebriate replied, "When

I was your age I was as respectable as you are and belonged to just as honorable a family; and it is only a matter of time when you will be like me, so you have no superiority to boast of, young man."

This set the young man to thinking as he never had done before. "If that is what drink inevitably leads to," he said to himself, "I would better quit;" and he did there and then. Without his drink he left the place to return no more.

XXIII. PURITY OF LIFE — PURPOSE OF SACRAMENTS

The foregoing chapters have been devoted to an explanation of some of the doctrines and ordinances of salvation as taught in the gospel of Jesus Christ. The principles therein discussed are to be accepted and practiced by those who desire salvation. According to the teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, salvation means "a man's being placed beyond the power of all his enemies." What the Prophet mentions here as "enemies" are man's evil inclinations and appetites—his inward enemies. To be saved, man must conquer himself and bring into subjection every evil desire, to develop his inherent virtues, and seek to live a per-

fect life, like that of the Master, Christ, who was without sin.

The gospel of Jesus Christ, as before stated, is the law of right living; and right living means a life of honesty, purity and love. No religious professions are of any value unless they embrace these the chief virtues of life; and all the forms and ceremonies of religion are of no effect when practiced unless they tend to make men honest and pure. "All liars, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie, and the whoremonger, and the sorcerer, shall have their part in that lake which burneth with fire and brimstone which is the second death." (Doctrine and Covenants 63:17.)

Pure religion, says the scripture, is this: "To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep

himself unspotted from the world." (James 1:27.)

The first and great commandment, says the scripture, is "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. * * * And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Loving the Lord is not only an act of gratitude in return for his kindness: it means more than this. If we love him, we admire and worship him and will instinctively seek to obey him and to become like him; and the more we become like him the greater happiness will we be capable of enjoying. To love one's neighbor as oneself is not only a matter of justice, kindness or benevolence. It is for one's own benefit. Hatred is injurious both to one's spiritual and physical constitu-

tion. He who possesses the spirit of hatred even towards an enemy punishes himself more than he does his enemy. Should he harbor hatred without informing his enemy of his feelings he alone is the sufferer; and if he declares his hatred, his enemy may rejoice over the fact. Should he take vengeance upon the one he dislikes his conscience will torment him more severely than it is possible for him to hurt his enemy. The claim that "vengeance is sweet" is a delusion.

To summarize briefly, religion is for the purpose of inculcating honesty, love, kindness, purity, etc., and it is for the development and perfection of these virtues that the gospel ceremonies are in the Church; and they are all of vital importance. There are no super-

stitious rites or useless ordinances connected with true religion.

People sometimes claim they can and do practice these heavenly virtues without observing the forms of religion. But they cannot do so to any great degree of perfection, and they never will be able to do so without the assistance of the helps God has revealed for the use of mankind—without walking in the narrow way that leads to perfection of life.

Men may paint without brushes or write without pens, but not so perfectly as with the aid of these appliances; and why ignore the helps within one's reach? Those who expect to cultivate their virtues to perfection and overcome all their evil inclinations without the help of religious ordinances and the safeguards of the Church are misled.

They do not realize what such an accomplishment means. People cannot live for themselves alone and yet practice the principles that are needed to save them. They cannot keep themselves "unspotted from the world" and the sins thereof, if they have never tried to do their part in helping to correct the evils that are in the world; and how can they do their part without associating with their fellows in the work?

Without faith in God they cannot possess the incentives to good works that such faith gives. Without repentance they can make no progress in developing their virtues, for repentance is the only means by which moral advancement can be made. Without baptism of water and of the Spirit they cannot receive and retain the inspira-

tion and assistance of the Lord, so necessary for their guidance, their encouragement, and their assurance of being in the way of eternal life. Without prayer they can accomplish nothing of worth. Without organization there can be no unity of action, and their individual efforts are weakened so that the good results of their labors are partially if not wholly lost. When they fail to associate with their fellow-worshipers to partake of the sacrament of the Lord's supper, they lose the strength and encouragement derived from participating in these privileges—they lose interest in the high object of their aim, and their determination is at an end. By disregarding the laws of their physical being, they lose their health, and are thus incapacitated for the labors and duties of life. It is there-

fore useless to contend that the ordinances of salvation are unnecessary. Each one is placed in the Church for a specific purpose, and they are all needed as helps, as guides, as shields, as stimulants.

It is true that the mere observance of outward ordinances will not save one. Salvation comes through the grace of God manifested in the atonement of Christ. But unless one accepts this atonement by obedience to the conditions upon which it is offered, he cannot expect it to bring him salvation. And these conditions are that he shall overcome all his evil inclinations and perfect himself as the Master is perfect, that he might be fit to dwell with him; and this he can do only with the help of the ordinances God has placed in the Church for that purpose.

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		APR 27 1990	
AUG 17 RECD			
	MAR 29 1996		
JAN 12 RECD		DEC 19 1990	
	SEP 1 1987	SEP 03 1996	
	MAR 10 1987	DEC 09 1996	
APR 20 1984		DEC 10 1996	
APR 7 1994		OCT 12 1998	
	MAR 26 1985		
MAR 27 1985		SEP 30 1998	
	AUG 11 1988	NOV 16 1998	
APR 2 1985	AUG 04	NOV 10 1998	
		JUL 26 2003	
	NOV 18 1988		
NOV 4 1985	NOV 28 1988		
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